

The Difference Between Emma and Everyone Else

There's something different about Emma. She's a lot like many other people. Still, there's a huge difference between Emma and everyone else.



Emma is ten years old, 55" tall, and weighs 74 pounds. She has dark eyes and hair like her mom, skin color like her grandmother, and a smile that is all her own. Emma's height, weight, eye color, skin color, and the shape of her nose and mouth are a few of Emma's *physical characteristics*.

Emma is usually happy, and often funny, helpful and kind. She works hard at school. Being happy, helpful, kind, and hard working are a part of Emma's *personality*.

Emma can sing, dance, and draw. Singing, dancing, and drawing are just a few of Emma's many *talents*.

© Carol Gray, 2013. Exclusive and restricted permission is hereby granted to print the Stories and activities in The Social Story Sampler for use with an individual or small group in a home, educational or clinical setting. May not be copied or used in presentation, or for financial gain. All other rights and restrictions apply.



Emma has *personal preferences*, things that she likes and things that she doesn't. She likes macaroni and cheese, butterflies, presents, flowers, riding horses, hot dogs, dogs, coloring, and watching television. Emma does not like brussel sprouts, worms on the sidewalk after it rains, or losing things.

Emma lives in an apartment in New York City with her family. She has been to Disney World. Emma goes many places and does many things. Where she lives, where she goes, and what she does are her *experiences*.



Emma is diagnosed with autism. To Emma, the diagnosis of autism means that she needs more help and practice than her sisters to work and play with others, and to make friends.

Emma has physical characteristics, personality traits, personal preferences, experiences, a family, friends, and autism. But, there is something that makes her different from everyone else. In the United States, there are about 202,125 people named *Emma*, so that's not it.



There are millions of people with....

- brown hair,
- brown eyes, or
- nice smiles.

That's like Emma except... it isn't.
No one looks exactly like her.

There are millions of people who are...

- happy,
- helpful,
- funny,
- kind, or
- hard working.

That's like Emma except... it isn't. No one sounds like Emma when she laughs.



There are probably millions of people who can...

- sing,
- dance, or
- draw.

That's like Emma except...it isn't. No one sings or dances like Emma, and her drawings are genuinely unique.



Millions of people like...

- soda,
- presents, or
- watching television.

That's like Emma except... it isn't.

There is no one whose favorite soda, presents, and television shows are the same as Emma's.



There are thousands of people who don't like...

- brussel sprouts,
- worms on the sidewalk after it rains, or
- losing things.

That's like Emma except... it isn't. If each of those people were asked what they don't like, they would not list brussel sprouts, worms, and losing things. Only Emma would list all three of those things.



There are about...

- 20,000,000 to 50,000,000 million people who visit Disney World each year, and about
- 8,244,910 who live in New York City, and more than
- half of them live in an apartment.

That's like Emma, except...it isn't. Emma's experience living in a New York City apartment and visiting Disney World is not exactly like anyone else's experience doing those same things.





Many people have a diagnosis, and many have lifelong disorders like autism. In the United States, there are about 871,590 children diagnosed with autism. That's like Emma, except it isn't. No one will experience autism exactly like Emma.

Emma is a lot like everyone else except that...she isn't. Whether looking at her physical characteristics, her personality, her experiences, her autism, or anything else, it's always the same thing that makes Emma different. She's a *person*, and there's only one of each.



This is, of course, true for everybody. What really makes Emma different from everyone else is the same thing that makes everyone different from Emma. Each one is a person. Like... like Emma.



